

THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT NO. 201

**A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SABBATH MORNING, JUNE 20, 1858,
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AT THE MUSIC HALL, ROYAL SURREY GARDENS.**

*“While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”
Acts 10:44.*

THE Bible is a book of the revelation of God. The God after whom the heathen blindly searched, and for whom reason gropes in darkness, is here plainly revealed to us in the pages of divine authorship, so that he who is willing to understand as much of Godhead as man can know, may here learn it if he is not willingly ignorant and willfully obstinate. The doctrine of the Trinity is especially taught in Holy Scripture. The word certainly does not occur, but the three divine persons of the One God are frequently and constantly mentioned, and Holy Scripture is exceedingly careful that we should all receive and believe that great truth of the Christian religion, that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods but one God: though they be each of them very God of very God, yet three in one and one in three is the JEHOVAH whom we worship.

You will notice in the works of *Creation* how carefully the Scriptures assure us that all the three divine persons took their share. “In the beginning JEHOVAH created the heavens and the earth,” and in another place we are told that God said, “Let *us* make man”—not one person, but all three taking counsel with each other with regard to the making of mankind. We know that the Father has laid the foundations and fixed those solid beams of light on which the blue arches of the sky are sustained, but we know with equal certainty that Jesus Christ, the eternal *Logos*, was with the Father in the beginning, and “without Him was not anything made that was made.” Moreover we have equal certainty that the Holy Spirit had a hand in Creation, for we are told that “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” And brooding with His dove-like wing, He brought out of the egg of chaos this mighty thing, the fair round world.

We have the like proof of the three persons in the Godhead in the matter of *Salvation*. We know that God the Father gave His Son, we have abundant proof that God the Father chose His people from before the foundations of the world, that He did invent the plan of salvation, and has always given His free, willing, and joyous consent to the salvation of His people. With regard to the share that the Son had in salvation, that is apparent enough to all. For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven, He was incarnate in a mortal body, He was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into hades, the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, He sits at the right hand of God, where also He makes intercession for us.

As to the Holy Spirit, we have equally sure proof that the Spirit of God works in conversion, for everywhere we are said to be begotten of the Holy Spirit, continually it is declared, that unless a man be born again from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God, while all the virtues and the graces of Christianity are described as being the fruits of the Spirit, because the Holy Spirit does from first to last work in us and carry out that which Jesus Christ has beforehand worked for us in His great redemption, which also God the Father has designed for us in His great predestinating scheme of salvation.

Now, it is to the work of the Holy Spirit that I shall this morning especially direct your attention, and I may as well mention the reason why I do so. It is this. We have received continually fresh confirmations of the good news from a far country, which has already made glad the hearts of many of God’s people. In the United States of America there is certainly a great awakening. No sane man living

there could think of denying it. There may be something of spurious excitement mixed up with it, but that good, lasting good, has been accomplished, no rational man can deny. Two hundred and fifty thousand persons—that is a quarter of a million—profess to have been regenerated since December last, have made a profession of their faith, and have united themselves with different sections of God's church. The work still progresses, if anything, at a more rapid rate than before, and that which makes me believe the work to be genuine is just this—that the enemies of Christ's holy Gospel are exceedingly angry at it.

When the devil roars at anything, you may rest assured there is some good in it. The devil is not like some dogs we know of, they never bark unless there is something to bark at. When Satan howls, we may rest assured he is afraid his kingdom is in danger.

Now, this great work in America has been manifestly caused by the outpouring of the Spirit, for no one minister has been a leader in it. All the ministers of the Gospel have co-operated in it, but none of them have stood in the van. God Himself has been the leader of His own hosts. It began with a desire for prayer. God's people began to pray, the prayer meetings were better attended than before, it was then proposed to hold meetings at times that had never been set apart for prayer, these also were well attended, and now, in the city of Philadelphia, at the hour of noon, every day in the week, three thousand persons can always be seen assembled together for prayer in one place.

Men of business, in the midst of their toil and labor, find an opportunity of running in there and offering a word of prayer, and then return to their occupations. And so, throughout all the States, prayer meetings, larger or smaller in number, have been convened. And there has been real prayer. Sinners beyond all count, have risen up in the prayer meeting, and have requested the people of God to pray for them, thus making public to the world that they had a desire after Christ, they have been prayed for, and the church has seen that God verily does hear and answer prayer.

I find that the Unitarian ministers for a little while took no notice of it. Theodore Parker snarls and raves tremendously at it, but he is evidently in a maze, he does not understand the mystery, and acts with regard to it as swine are said to do with pearls. While the church was found asleep, and doing very little, the Socinian could afford to stand in his pulpit and sneer at anything like evangelical religion, but now that there has been an awakening, he looks like a man that has just awakened out of sleep. He sees something, he does not know what it is.

The power of religion is just that which will always puzzle the Unitarian, for he knows but little about that. At the form of religion he is not much amazed, for he can to an extent endorse that himself, but the supernaturalism of the Gospel—the mystery—the miracle—the power—the demonstration of the Spirit that comes with the preaching, is what such men cannot comprehend, and they gaze and wonder, and then become filled with wrath, but still they have to confess there is something there they cannot understand, a mental phenomenon that is far beyond their philosophy—a thing which they cannot reach by all their science, nor understand by all their reason.

Now, if we have the same effect produced in this land, the one thing we must seek is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and I thought, perhaps, this morning in preaching upon the work of the Holy Spirit, that text might be fulfilled—"Him that honors me I will honor." My sincere desire is to honor the Holy Spirit this morning, and if He will be pleased to honor His church in return, unto Him shall be the glory forever.

"While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word."

In the first place, I shall endeavor to describe *the method of the Spirit's operation*. Secondly, *the absolute necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence*, if we would see men converted, and then, in the third place, I shall suggest the ways and means by which under divine grace we may obtain a like falling down of the Spirit upon our churches.

I. In the first place, then, I will endeavor to explain THE METHOD OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S OPERATIONS.

But let me guard myself against being misunderstood. We can explain what the Spirit does, but how He does it, no man must pretend to know. The work of the Holy Spirit is the peculiar mystery of the Christian religion. Almost any other thing is plain, but this must remain an inscrutable secret into which it were wrong for us to attempt to pry. Who knows where the winds are begotten? Who knows, therefore, how the Spirit works, for He is like the wind. "The wind blows where it listeth, and you hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it comes, and whither it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

In Holy Scripture certain great secrets of nature are mentioned as being parallel with the secret working of the Spirit. The procreation of children is instanced as a parallel wonder, for we know not the mystery thereof, how much less, therefore, shall we expect to know that more secret and hidden mystery of the new birth, and new creation of man in Christ Jesus. But let no man be staggered at this, for there are mysteries in nature, the wisest man will tell you there are depths in nature into which he cannot dive, and heights into which he cannot soar. He who pretends to have unraveled the knot of creation has made a mistake, he may have cut the knot by his rough ignorance, and by his foolish conjectures, but the knot itself must remain beyond the power of man's unraveling, until God Himself shall explain the secret.

There are marvelous things, that, as yet, men have sought to know in vain. They may, perhaps, discover many of them, but how the Spirit works, no man can know. But now I wish to explain what the Holy Spirit does, although we cannot tell *how* He does it. I take it that the Holy Spirit's work in conversion is two-fold. First, it is an awakening of the powers that man already has, and secondly, it is an implantation of powers which he never had at all.

In the great work of the new birth, the Holy Spirit first of all *awakens the mental powers*, for be it remembered that, the Holy Spirit never gives any man new *mental* powers. Take for instance reason—the Holy Spirit does not give men reason, for they have reason prior to their conversion. What the Holy Spirit does is to teach our reason, right reason—to set our reason in the right track, so that we can use it for the high purpose of discerning between good and evil, between the precious and vile. The Holy Spirit does not give man a will, for man has a will before, but He makes the will that was in bondage to Satan free to the service of God. The Holy Spirit gives no man the power to think, or the organ of belief—for man has power to believe or think as far as the mental act is concerned, but He gives that belief which is already there a tendency to believe the right thing, and He gives to the power of thought the propensity to think in the right way, so that instead of thinking irregularly, we begin to think as God would have us think, and our mind desires to walk in the steps of God's revealed truth.

There may be here, this morning, a man of enlarged understanding in things political—but his understanding is darkened with regard to spiritual things—he sees no beauty in the person of Christ—he sees nothing desirable in the way of holiness—he chooses the evil and forsakes the good. Now the Holy Spirit will not give him a new understanding, but He will cleanse his old understanding so that he will discern between things that differ, and shall discover that it is but a poor thing to enjoy "the pleasures of sin for a season," and let go an "eternal weight of glory."

There shall be a man here too who is desperately set against religion, and wills not to come to God, and do what we will, we are not able to persuade him to change his mind and turn to God. The Holy Spirit will not make a new will in that man, but He will turn his old will, and instead of willing to do evil He will make him will to do right—He will make him will to be saved by Christ—He will make him "willing in the day of His power." Remember, there is no power in man so fallen but that the Holy Spirit can raise it up. However debased a man may be, in one instant, by the miraculous power of the Spirit, all his faculties may be cleansed and purged. Ill-judging reason may be made to judge rightly, stout, obstinate wills may be made to run willingly in the ways of God's commandments, evil and depraved affections may in an instant be turned to Christ, and old desires that are tainted with vice, may be replaced by heavenly aspirations.

The work of the Spirit on the mind is the remodeling of it, the new forming of it. He does not bring new material to the mind—it is in another part of the man that He puts up a new structure—but He puts

the mind that had fallen out of order into its proper shape. He builds up pillars that had fallen down, and erects the palaces that had crumbled to the earth. This is the first work of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of man.

Besides this, the Holy Spirit gives to men *powers which they never had before*. According to Scripture, I believe man is constituted in a three-fold manner. He has a body, by the Holy Spirit that body is made the temple of the Lord. He has a mind, by the Holy Spirit that mind is made like an altar in the temple. But man by nature is nothing higher than that, he is mere body and soul. When the Spirit comes, He breathes into him a third higher principle which we call the spirit. The apostle describes man as man, “body, soul and spirit.”

Now if you search all the mental writers through, you will find they all declare there are only two parts—body and mind, and they are quite right, for they deal with unregenerate man, but in regenerate man there is a third principle as much superior to mere mind as mind is superior to dead animal matter—that third principle is that with which a man prays, it is that with which he savingly believes, or rather it is that which compels the mind to perform their acts. It is that which, operating upon the mind, makes the same use of the mind as the mind does of the body. When, after desiring to walk I make my legs move, it is my mind that compels them, and so my spirit, when I desire to pray, compels my mind to think the thought of prayer and compels my soul also, if I desire to praise, to think the thought of praise, and lift itself upward towards God.

As the body without the soul is dead, so the soul without the spirit is dead, and one work of the Spirit is to quicken the dead soul by breathing into it the living Spirit, as it is written, “The first man, Adam, was made a living *soul*, but the second Adam was made a quickening *Spirit*”—and, “as we have borne the image of the earthly, so must we bear the image of the heavenly,” that is, we must have in us, if we would be converted, the quickening Spirit, which is put into us by God the Holy Ghost.

I say again, the spirit has powers which the mind never has. It has the power of communion with Christ, which to a degree is a mental act, but it can no more be performed by man without the Spirit, than the act of walking could be performed by man, if he were destitute of a soul to suggest the idea of walking. The Spirit suggests the thoughts of communion which the mind obeys and carries out. Nay, there are times I think, when the Spirit leaves the mind altogether, times when we forget everything of earth, and almost cease to think, to reason, to judge, to weigh, or to will. Our souls are like the chariots of Amminadab, drawn swiftly onwards without any powers of volition. We lean upon the breast of Jesus, and in rhapsody divine, and in ecstasy celestial, we enjoy the fruits of the land of the blessed, and pluck the clusters of Eschol before entering into the land of promise.

I think I have clearly put these two points before you. The work of the Spirit consists, first, in awakening powers already possessed by man, but which were asleep and out of order, and in the next place in putting into man powers which he had not before. And to make this simple to the humblest mind, let me suppose man to be something like a machine, all the wheels are out of order, the cogs do not strike upon each other, the wheels do not turn regularly, the rods will not act, the order is gone. Now, the first work of the Spirit is to put these wheels in the right place, to fit the wheels upon the axles, to put the right axle to the right wheel, then to put wheel to wheel, so that they may act upon each other.

But that is not all His work. The next thing is to put fire and steam so that these things shall go to work. He does not put fresh wheels, He puts old wheels into order, and then He puts the motive power which is to move the whole. First, He puts our mental powers into their proper order and condition, then He puts a living quickening spirit, so that all these shall move according to the holy will and law of God.

But, mark you, this is not all the Holy Spirit does. For if He were to do this, and then leave us, none of us would get to heaven. If any of you should be so near to heaven that you could hear the angels singing over the walls—if you could almost see within the pearly gates—still, if the Holy Spirit did not help you the last step, you would never enter there. All the work is through His divine operation. Hence it is the Spirit who keeps the wheels in motion, and who takes away that defilement which, naturally engendered by our original sin, falls upon the machine and puts it out of order. He takes this away, and

keeps the machine constantly going without injury, until at last He removes man from the place of defilement to the land of the blessed, a perfect creature, as perfect as he was when he came from the mold of his Maker.

And I must say, before I leave this point that all the former part of what I have mentioned is done instantaneously. When a man is converted to God, it is done in a moment. Regeneration is an instantaneous work. Conversion to God, the fruit of regeneration, occupies all our life, but regeneration itself is effected in an instant. A man hates God, the Holy Spirit makes him love God. A man is opposed to Christ, he hates His Gospel, does not understand it and will not receive it, the Holy Spirit comes, puts light into his darkened understanding, takes the chain from his bondaged will, gives liberty to his conscience, gives life to his dead soul, so that the voice of conscience is heard, and the man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. And all this is done, mark you, by the instantaneous supernatural influence of God the Holy Ghost working as He wills among the sons of men.

II. Having thus dwelt upon the method of the Holy Spirit's work, I shall now turn to the second point, THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN ORDER TO CONVERSION.

In our text we are told that "while Peter spoke these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Beloved, the Holy Ghost fell on Peter first, or else it would not have fallen on his hearers. There is a necessity that the preacher himself, if we are to have souls saved, should be under the influence of the Spirit. I have constantly made it my prayer that I might be guided by the Spirit even in the smallest and least important parts of the service, for you cannot tell but that the salvation of a soul may depend upon the reading of a hymn, or upon the selection of a chapter. Two persons have joined our church and made a profession of being converted simply through my reading a hymn—

"Jesus, lover of my soul."

They did not remember anything else in the hymn, but those words made such a deep impression upon their mind, that they could not help repeating them for days afterwards, and then the thought arose, "Do I love Jesus?" And then they considered what strange ingratitude it was that He should be the lover of their souls, and yet they should not love Him. Now I believe the Holy Spirit led me to read that hymn. And many persons have been converted by some striking saying of the preacher. But why was it the preacher uttered that saying? Simply because he was led thereunto by the Holy Spirit. Rest assured, beloved, that when any part of the sermon is blessed to your heart, the minister said it because he was ordered to say it by his Master.

I might preach today a sermon which I preached on Friday, and which was useful then, and there might be no good whatever come from it now, because it might not be the sermon which the Holy Ghost would have delivered today. But if with sincerity of heart I have sought God's guidance in selecting the topic and He rests upon me in the preaching of the Word, there is no fear but that it shall be found adapted to your immediate wants. The Holy Spirit must rest upon your preachers. Let them have all the learning of the wisest men, and all the eloquence of such men as Demosthenes and Cicero, still the Word cannot be blessed to you, unless first of all the Spirit of God has guided the minister's mind in the selection of his subject, and in the discussion of it.

But if Peter himself were under the hand of the Spirit, that would fail unless the Spirit of God, then, fell upon his hearers, and I shall endeavor now to show the absolute necessity of the Spirit's work in the conversion of men.

Let us remember what kind of thing the work is, and we shall see that other means are altogether out of the question. It is quite certain that men cannot be converted by physical means. The Church of Rome thought that she could convert men by means of armies, so she invaded countries, and threatened them with war and bloodshed unless they would repent and embrace her religion. However, it availed but little, and men were prepared to die rather than leave their faith, she therefore tried those beautiful things—stakes, racks, dungeons, axes, swords, fire, and by these things she hoped to convert men. You

have heard of the man who tried to wind up his watch with a pickax. That man was extremely wise, compared with the man who thought to touch mind through matter. All the machines you invent cannot touch mind. Talk about tying angel's wings with green withes, or manacling the cherubim with iron chains, and then talk about meddling with the minds of men through physical means. Why, the things don't set, they cannot act. All the king's armies that ever were, and all the warriors clothed with mail, with all their ammunition, could never touch the mind of man. That is an impregnable castle which is not to be reached by physical agency.

Nor, again, can man be converted by moral argument. "Well," says one, "I think he may. Let a minister preach earnestly, and he may persuade men to be converted." Ah! beloved, it is for lack of knowing better that you say so. Melancthon thought so, but you know what he said after he tried it—"Old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon." So will every preacher find it, if he thinks his arguments can ever convert man. Let me give you a parallel case. Where is the logic that can persuade an Ethiopian to change his skin? By what argument can you induce a leopard to renounce his spots? Even so may he that is accustomed to do evil learn to do well. But if the Ethiopian's skin be changed it must be by a supernatural process, and if the leopard's spots be removed, He that made the leopard must do it.

Even so is it with the heart of man. If sin were a thing *ab extra*, and external, we could induce man to change it. For instance, you may induce a man to leave off drunkenness or swearing, because those things are not a part of his nature—he has added that vice to his original depravity. But the hidden evil of the heart is beyond all moral persuasion. I dare say a man might have enough argument to induce him to hang himself, but I am certain no argument will ever induce him to hang his sins, to hang his self-righteousness, and to come and humble himself at the foot of the cross, for the religion of Christ is so contrary to all the propensities of man, that it is like swimming against the stream to approach it, for the stream of man's will and man's desire is exactly the opposite of the religion of Jesus Christ. If you wanted a proof of that, at the lifting of my finger, there are thousands in this hall who would rise to prove it, for they would say, "I have found it so, sir, in my experience, I hated religion as much as any man, I despised Christ and His people, and I know not to this day how it is that I am what I am, unless it is the work of God."

I have seen the tears run down a man's cheeks when he has come to me in order to be united to the church of Christ, and he has said, "Sir, I wonder how it is I am here today, if anyone had told me a year ago that I should think as I now think, and feel as I now feel, I would have called him a born fool for his pains. I used to say I never would be one of those canting Methodists, I liked to spend my Sunday in pleasure, and I did not see why I was to be cooping myself up in the house of God listening to a man talk. *I pray, sir?* No, not I. I said the best providence in all the world was a good strong pair of hands, and to take care of what you got. If any man talked to me about religion, why I would slam the door in his face, and pretty soon put him out, but the things that I loved then, I now hate, and the things that then I hated now I love, I cannot do or say enough to show how total is the change that has been wrought in me. It must have been the work of God, it could not have been wrought by me, I feel assured, it must be some one greater than myself, who could thus turn my heart." I think these two things are proofs that we want something more than nature and since physical agency will not do, and mere moral suasion will never accomplish it, that there must be an absolute necessity for the Holy Spirit.

But again, if you will just think a minute what the work is, you will soon see that none but God can accomplish it. In the Holy Scripture, conversion is often spoken of as being a new creation. If you talk about creating yourselves, I should feel obliged if you would create a fly first. Create a gnat, create a grain of sand, and when you have created that, you may talk about creating a new heart. Both are alike, impossible, for creation is the work of God. But still, if you could create a grain of dust, or create even a world, it would not be half the miracle, for you must first find a thing which has created itself. Could that be? Suppose you had no existence, how could you create yourself? Nothing cannot produce

anything. Now, how can man re-create himself? A man cannot create himself into a new condition, when he has no being in that condition, but is, as yet, a thing that is not.

Then, again, the work of creation is said to be like the resurrection. "We are alive from the dead." Now, can the dead in the grave raise themselves? Let any minister who thinks he can convert souls, go and raise a corpse, let him go and stand in one of the cemeteries, and bid the tombs open their mouths, and make room for those once buried there to awaken, and he will have to preach in vain. But if he could do it, that is not the miracle, it is for the dead to raise themselves, for an inanimate corpse to kindle in its own breast the spark of life anew. If the work is a resurrection, a creation, does it not strike you that it must be beyond the power of man? It must be wrought in him by no one less than God Himself.

And there is yet one more consideration, and I shall have concluded this point. Beloved, even if man could save himself, I would have you recollect how averse he is to it! If we could make our hearers all willing, the battle would be accomplished. "Well," says one, "if I am willing to be saved, can I not be saved?" Assuredly you can, but the difficulty is, we cannot bring men to be willing. That shows, therefore, that there must be a constraint put upon their will. There must be an influence exerted upon them, which they have not in themselves, in order to make them willing in the day of God's power. And this is the glory of the Christian religion.

The Christian religion has within its own heart power to spread itself. We do not ask you to be willing first. We come and tell you the news, and we believe that the Spirit of God working with us, will make you willing. If the progress of the Christian religion depended upon the voluntary assent of mankind, it would never go an inch further, but because the Christian religion has with it an omnipotent influence, constraining men to believe it, it is therefore what it is and must be triumphant, "till like a sea of glory it spreads from shore to shore."

III. Now, I shall conclude by bringing one or two thoughts forward, with regard to WHAT MUST BE DONE AT THIS TIME IN ORDER TO BRING DOWN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

It is quite certain, beloved, if the Holy Spirit willed to do it, that every man, woman, and child in this place would be converted now. If God, the Sovereign Judge of all, would be pleased now to send out His Spirit, every inhabitant of this million-peopled city might be brought at once to turn unto the living God. Without instrumentality, without the preacher, without books, without anything, God has it in His power to convert men. We have known persons about their business, not thinking about religion at all, who have had a thought injected into their heart, and that thought has been the prolific mother of a thousand meditations, and through these meditations they have been brought to Christ. Without the aid of the minister, the Holy Spirit has thus worked, and today He is not restrained. There may be some men, great in infidelity, staunch in opposition to the cross of Christ, but, without asking their consent, the Holy Spirit can pull down the strong man, and make the mighty man bow himself. When we talk of the Omnipotent God, there is nothing too great for Him to do.

But, beloved, God has been pleased to put great honor upon instrumentality, He could work without it if He pleased, but He does not do so. However, this is the first thought I want to give you, if you would have the Holy Spirit exert Himself in our midst, you must first of all look to Him and not to instrumentality. When Jesus Christ preached, there were very few converted under Him, and the reason was because the Holy Spirit was not abundantly poured forth. He had the Holy Spirit without measure Himself, but on others the Holy Spirit was not as yet poured out. Jesus Christ said, "Greater works than these shall you do because I go to My Father, in order to send the Holy Spirit," and recollect that those few who were converted under Christ's ministry, were not converted by Him, but by the Holy Spirit that rested upon Him at that time. Jesus of Nazareth was anointed of the Holy Spirit.

Now then, if Jesus Christ, the great founder of our religion, needed to be anointed of the Holy Spirit, how much more our ministers? And if God would always make the distinction even between His own Son as an instrument, and the Holy Spirit as the agent, how much more ought we to be careful to do that between poor puny men and the Holy Spirit? Never let us hear you say again, "So many persons were converted by So-and-so." They were not. If converted, they were not converted by man. Instrumentality

is to be used, but the Spirit is to have the honor of it. Pay no more a superstitious reverence to man, think no more that God is tied to your plans, and to your agencies. Do not imagine that so many city missionaries, so much good will be done. Do not say, "So many preachers, so many sermons, so many souls saved." Do not say, "So many Bibles, so many tracts, so much good done." Not so, use these, but remember it is not in that proportion the blessing comes, it is, so much Holy Spirit, so many souls in-gathered.

And now another thought. If we would have the Spirit, beloved, we must each of us try to honor Him. There are some chapels into which if you were to enter, you would never know there was a Holy Spirit. Mary Magdalene said of old, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him," and the Christian might often say so, for there is nothing said about the Lord until they come to the end, and then there is just the benediction, or else you would not know that there were three persons in one God at all. Until our churches honor the Holy Spirit, we shall never see it abundantly manifested in our midst. Let the preacher always confess before he preaches that he relies upon the Holy Spirit. Let him burn his manuscripts and depend upon the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit does not come to help him, let him be still and let the people go home and pray that the Spirit will help him next Sunday.

And do you also, in the use of all your agencies, always honor the Spirit? We often begin our religious meetings without prayer, it is all wrong. We must honor the Spirit, unless we put Him first, He will never make crowns for us to wear. He will get victories, but He will have the honor of them, and if we do not give to Him the honor, He will never give to us the privilege and success. And best of all, if you would have the Holy Spirit, let us meet together earnestly to pray for Him. Remember, the Holy Spirit will not come to us as a church, unless we seek Him. "For this thing will I be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them."

We purpose during the coming week to hold meetings of special prayer, to supplicate for a revival of religion. On the Friday morning I opened the first prayer meeting at Trinity Chapel, Brixton, and, I think, at seven o'clock, we had as many as two hundred and fifty persons gathered together. It was a pleasant sight. During the hour, nine brethren prayed, one after the other, and I am sure there was the spirit of prayer there.

Some persons present sent up their names, asking that we would offer special petitions for them, and I doubt not the prayers will be answered. At Park Street, on Monday morning, we shall have a prayer meeting from eight to nine, then during the rest of the week there will be a prayer meeting in the morning from seven to eight. On Monday evening we shall have the usual prayer meeting at seven, when I hope there will be a large number attending.

I find that my brother, Baptist Noel, has commenced morning and evening prayer meetings, and they have done the same thing in Norwich and many provincial towns, where, without any pressure, the people are found willing to come. I certainly did not expect to see as many as two hundred and fifty persons at an early hour in the morning meet together for prayer. I believe it was a good sign. The Lord has put prayer into their hearts and therefore they were willing to come. "Prove Me now here, says the Lord of hosts, and see if I do not pour you out a blessing so that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Let us meet and pray, and if God does not hear us, it will be the first time He has broken His promise. Come, let us go up to the sanctuary, let us meet together in the house of the Lord, and offer solemn supplication, and I say again, if the Lord does not make bare His arm in the sight of all the people, it will be the reverse of all His previous actions, it will be the contrary of all His promises, and contradictory to Himself. We have only to try Him, and the result is certain. In dependence on His Spirit, if we only meet for prayer, the Lord shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him. O Lord, lift up Yourself because of Your enemies, pluck Your right hand out of Your bosom, O Lord our God, for Christ's sake, Amen.

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